



# Kit Bond

## Sixth Generation Missourian

<http://bond.senate.gov>

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## FIRST RESPONDERS NEWS

### Bond Shows Support for our Troops

At the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Senator Kit Bond tied a yellow ribbon to a tree on his property in rural Mexico, Missouri in support of U.S. combat troops and POWs in Iraq, where Bond said it would remain 'til the troops come home.' Bond took the occasion to ask all Missouri families to do the same after selecting a tree on their property or the grounds of a local school, church or town-hall.

"The lightning success we had in liberating the Iraqi people from the oppressive regime of Saddam Hussein was made possible through the bravery and sacrifice of our soldiers," said Bond, a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee. "As they begin to return home, these yellow ribbons will remain as a vivid symbol of the support for our troops and a constant reminder that the peace we enjoy at home is paid by those troops that continue to be in harm's way."

Bond said that the symbolic act can serve as a powerful lesson to young children and teenagers. "Each generation of Americans has an obligation to teach the next that freedom is not free," said Bond. "Freedom is a gift that carries a heavy responsibility. And part of that responsibility is to support our troops and prisoners-of-war."

The yellow ribbon campaign in Bond's



*Bond shows his support for troops in Iraq.*

hometown Mexico is being led by local funeral director Connie Pickering, who headed similar efforts during the Gulf War.

The tying of a yellow ribbon around a tree to support troops is a relatively new American tradition. It blossomed during the 1979-1981 Iranian hostage crisis and became a full-blown American tradition during the 1990-1991 Persian Gulf War. Some believe it had its roots in the early 1970s popular song "Tie a Yellow Ribbon Around the Old Oak Tree." The Library of Congress has researched this new tradition and a full history can be found on their website at: [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov).

### Bond Follows Through on Promise by Boosting Emergency Responder's Funding

Last year, Senator Bond met with the International Association of Fire Chiefs, Missouri Task Force One, and local fire departments across the state of Missouri discussing their funding needs. Highlighting his position on the Senate Appropriations Committee he assured emergency responders of his commitment to increasing federal funding.

Bond followed through on this promise in the fiscal year 2003 Omnibus Appropriations bill. As chairman of the VA-HUD Senate Appropriations Subcommittee, Bond was able to secure \$750 million for the Assistance to Fire Grant program, more than double the \$360 million in fiscal year 2002, and only \$100 million in fiscal year 2001.

"September 11<sup>th</sup> was a wake up call for the federal government," said Bond. "Emergency responders in every city and town in America are now on the front-lines and they must be given the tools and resources to be ready for the next attack. These dollars can provide life-saving vehicles, equipment and training for our firefighters which will ensuring."

Missouri has been a direct recipient of these significant increases in federal funding. Last year, 174 Missouri fire departments received over \$10 million in Fire Grant program dollars. Senator Bond continues to encourage local fire departments across Missouri to take advantage of this program.

Those local fire departments who utilized the 2003 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program application process, ending on April 11, should expect to learn soon of grant awards coming their way. The \$750 million provided through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Fire Administration program, will be distributed beginning no later than July 2003.

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant program awards one-year grants directly to fire departments. Federal money can be used for local needs in the following areas: fire operations and firefighters safety, fire prevention, emergency medical services and firefighting vehicles. More information can be found at [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov).

### Bond Announces \$26 Million to Bolster Missouri's Bioterrorism Health Defenses

Senator Kit Bond recently announced that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will send Missouri \$26 million in federal dollars to bolster local health care facilities' defenses against biological attack.

"A strong public health infrastructure is the best defense against a bioterrorism attack," said Bond, who as a member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee introduced legislation last year to bolster local bioterrorism aid. "In this new age of terrorism, every town and city in America is potentially on the front-lines. Like our military, our public health system must be at a constant state of readiness. Our local and state health department staffs, our emergency room doctors and nurses, our paramedics and our primary care providers must have the training and education required to identify and respond to an act of bioterrorism quickly and effectively."

Missouri will receive \$25,954,826 in fiscal year 2003 bioterrorism aid to help local health care facilities and other emergency response centers improve their planning and preparedness activities, enhance laboratory capacity, educate and train health care personnel and to develop new drugs, therapies and vaccines. Through the funding, public health systems will receive \$16,424,504 while the remaining \$9,530,322

will be used by hospitals to increase overall readiness. These dollars are part of HHS's \$3.5 billion-dollar budget for overall bioterrorism preparedness.

Twenty percent of the funding is immediately available to meet several crucial needs including small pox vaccination for health workers and emergency responders; support activities already approved in 2002 state plans which need additional resources now; and enhance, intensify and accelerate times for critical activities already approved under last year's state plans. HHS will send the remaining eighty percent of the funding to the state following the approval of Missouri's public health and hospital preparedness plan.

*Fire Chief Paulsell's letter to Missouri Firefighters.*

### Dear Firefighters,

Since September 11, 2001, there has been significant increase in and appreciation of the service provided by America's firefighters. On the true front lines of homeland security, our nation's firefighters are facing and accepting new challenges and responsibilities.

While many national leaders have talked a lot about supporting America's firefighters, few have delivered. Missouri's senior senator, Kit Bond, I am proud to say, is not one of them.

Even before the tragedies of September 11, 2001, Kit was delivering badly needed training funds to help Missouri's firefighters

respond to dangerous methamphetamine lab fires. After the terrorists attacks of September 11, 2001, Kit Bond trekked all around our state to hear first-hand what Missouri firefighters need to help protect America at home. He followed up by making good on his promise to help. That is when we saw Kit's influence in Washington pay-off. He boosted the Fire Act grant program, which delivers federal help to fire fighters nationwide, from \$100 million two years ago to \$750 million in annual funding today. What does that mean here at home? In the past two years, 243 Missouri fire departments have received more than \$13 million in Fire Act grants for equipment as a direct result of Kit's work and interest. There is more of that money still coming, too.

In the mid-1990's, Kit also helped us create and support Missouri Task Force 1, our state's only urban search and rescue task force. It is part of the federally-certified, network of emergency responders. Largely because of Kit's direct involvement, Missouri Task Force 1 was able to respond immediately to the September 11, 2001, World Trade Center attacks by deploying for ten days to New York City to help rescue victims.

I know from years of personal experience that Missouri Senator Kit Bond is a true friend and champion of our nation's firefighters. His rock-solid support for Missouri firefighters is just one more great example of how he delivers for our state.

Steve Paulsell, Fire Chief  
Boone County Fire Protection District



*Bond announces funding for Missouri Task Force One.*



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